

In search of the best and brightest: Why manufacturers MUST engage more racialized women

Study is an important resource for manufacturers and other industry stakeholders.

6:00 am, 29 July 2021, London, ON - Ontario manufacturers stand to benefit from engaging a more diverse workforce, concludes a new Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing report. The report ([available here](#)), titled '**Bridges not Barriers: Advancing Racialized Women in Manufacturing**,' features insight from three racialized women who own or lead manufacturing companies in Ontario: **Peng-Sang Cau** of **ATS Automation**, **Kathy Cheng** of **Redwood Classics Apparel**, and **Niru Somayajula** of **Sensor Technology Ltd.** To remain competitive, Ontario manufacturers need to demonstrate the appeal of a career in manufacturing to more people and other segments of society (like racialized women).

The report demonstrates that while Ontario's population is famously diverse, this diversity is not reflected within the workforces or leadership of most manufacturers. "It is difficult to become what you cannot see. Yes, manufacturers employ racialized women, but how many of those women are in leadership roles? How many have been mentored for career advancement or leadership opportunities? The answer is not enough," said report co-author Shannon Miller.

The report also looks at the salary disparity among racialized and non-racialized women and men working in leadership roles in manufacturing. "In addition to the lack of representation [of racialized women in manufacturing], we found that those women who are in management roles are often paid the least on average - even when factoring in education levels," said report co-author Eva Kwan.

Despite these challenges, the Trillium Network remains optimistic. Through commitment and intentional workforce renewal strategies (led by companies, industry leaders, and governments), manufacturing employment conditions and opportunities can and will improve for underrepresented groups, including women, racialized persons, and youth. As Trillium Network's Managing Director Brendan Sweeney puts it, "While the numbers may be sobering, this report shows there are clear steps manufacturers can take to affect change in this. Those that do will gain a competitive advantage."



The Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing is a provincially-funded non-profit organization whose mandate is to raise public and investor awareness of Ontario's advanced manufacturing ecosystem.

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